SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI: Sir, we are having one link under the National Water Development Agency Programme. Under the aegis of the National Water Development Agency, we are having a link, that is, the Par-Tapi Narmada river link. If it materialises, then certainly, water can be provided to the Kutch area. These rivers pass through different States. If the different States agree, then this Link Canal can materialise, and water can be provided to the Kutch area.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Performance of Oil Companies in post APM Regime

*584. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of public sector oil companies which would suffer loss in the month of April with the dismantling of APM from the first of April and his instructions to the oil companies to maintain the prices of petroleum products constantly;

(b) the amount of profit the stand-alone refineries in the private sector would make after dismantling of APM in the month of April; and

(c) in what manner Government propose to balance the increase in cost of crude oil and selling of petro-products in the open market at international parity?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) to (c) No instructions have been issued by the Government to the public sector oil companies regarding the prices of petroleum products after the dismantling of Administered Pricing Mechanism (APM).

The making of profit or incurring loss by an oil company would *inter-alia* depend upon factors such as the prevalent international price of crude oil and petroleum products, cost of production and distribution, demand marketing strategy etc. In the month of April 2002, the prices of crude oil and petroleum products in the international market had increased. However, profift or loss of any oil refinery or marketing company would be known only after the close of the financial year.

After the dismantling of APM, the normal fluctuations in the international oil market would be reflected in the domestic prices of petroleum products. However, Government are constantly reviewing the international oil prices, particularly the volatility and its likely impact on the domestic market. As and when Government intervention is considered necessary, appropriate measures will be taken.

LPG Agency at Tirupattur in Tamil Nadu

*585. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of problems faced by LPG consumers in Tirupattur and surrounding areas in Sivaganga district of Tamil Nadu due to non-availability of LPG agencies in that area;

(b) if so, whether LPG agencies are proposed to be set up at Tirupattur;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) to (d) At present, the requirement of LPG consumers of Tirupattur and surrounding areas is being met by the nearest distributors of Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs). Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited have planned a new agency in the area. OMCs have not reported any problem regarding supply of LPG to the enrolled customers.

Excise duty on bicycle parts

*586. SHRI SUKHDEV SINGH LIBRA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received representation from United Cycle and Parts Manufacturers' Association, Ludhiana (Punjab) requesting the Central Government to consider the imposition of excise duty on bicycle and its parts;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what is the Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government have received a representation dated 5.3.2002 from United Cycle & Parts Manufacturer Association, Ludhiana, requesting the